

BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD

MAY 1940

VOL. 85, No. 5



Philippine Moros Turning to the Word

What Has God to Say?

AT the 124th Annual Meeting of the American Bible Society held on May 9 the Board of Managers presented its report covering the work of the Society for 1939. It was rich in encouragement, revealing a growing eagerness on the part of anxious people in many lands who sought to know what God has to say in this time of increasing crisis. It carried also a sobering challenge in the fact that countless additional copies of God's Word could have been placed in eager hands had the Society's resources permitted.

The following paragraphs are culled from the report as it takes the reader from point to point in the homeland and in many foreign countries:

We begin at the Bible House, where a large pulpit Bible lies open night and day with an arrow, changed each day, pointing to some passage of promise or of comfort or of guidance. Hundreds of people pass by, and almost always someone can be seen reading from the open Book—faces of people of means and people in evident want, mothers with babies, dog-walkers, laborers, young people, ne'er-do-wells, turning to the Book. Let the little arrow fall from its place or the light at night go out, and there is always a prompt report from someone who turns regularly to the Word and cannot miss his daily bread gathered from the wayside Bible.

The Bible House is headquarters for the work of the Eastern District, which serves New York State and northern New Jersey. Writes one of the faithful colporteurs who for years have sought out the forgotten people of this teeming seaboard area: "Many persons have heavily bur-

dened consciences, and they do not know how to unburden them. There is evident relief on their faces when the man at their door has a Bible in his hand. Here is an opportunity to ask, 'Do you think there is forgiveness for such a sin as I have committed?'—and I answer, 'The Bible says that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from *all* sin,' and the door is open for the Saviour to come in."

One whole region in the Atlantic District turned toward the Word in a most remarkable way during the year. The city of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding towns in the Wyoming Valley spent ten days in stimulating interest in the Bible, the local ministers conceiving and developing the varied program. More than 10,000 people heard

the various addresses that were given, not only in the churches, but in service clubs, high schools and private schools. There were daily radio addresses, Bible exhibits in hotels and other public places, and special sales of Bibles in the stores. The newspapers conducted a con-

(Turn to page 83)

During 1939 the Society—

- distributed 7,370,908 volumes of Scripture, which is an increase over the distribution of 1938, in spite of budgetary limitations;
- distributed almost twice as many whole Bibles in China as in 1937;
- began cooperative work with the British and Foreign Bible Society in Venezuela;
- shipped the first consignment of New Testaments in their language to the Mam Indians in Guatemala;
- achieved unprecedented distribution in the West Indies, Brazil, and Chile Agencies;
- supplied the Gospels of St. Mark and St. John, the Book of Acts, and the Psalms in Portuguese Braille for the blind of Brazil;
- inaugurated its annual "Read the Bible" seal campaign at the Easter season;
- exhibited at the New York and San Francisco World's Fairs;
- participated in a conference of Bible Societies in July in Woudschoten, Holland, which, coming just before the outbreak of the war, proved most profitable;
- inaugurated a Forward Movement for the securing of funds from churches and individuals, that is designed to increase the income from these sources at the end of four years by \$200,000;
- welcomed as its new General Secretary, the Reverend Frederick W. Cropp, of Wheeling, West Virginia.

BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD

A Journal Dedicated to the Wider Distribution
of the Holy Scriptures

VOLUME 85

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Turning to the Word

“**W**ITHOUT doubt, the most read book in the West Indies is the Bible,” wrote a distinguished journalist in one of the most important newspapers of Cuba. “I heard more about the Bible in the last three months than in ten years before,” said a veteran newspaperman who visited the Bible House in New York. “There is an appreciable turning to the Word as the pressure of present-day problems becomes heavier and heavier,” writes a District Secretary, who has kept his hand for years on the pulse of seven populous states of our own nation.

From many directions comes further evidence of this “turning to the Word.” China’s growing interest in Christ has been measured for the past few years by a gradual increase in the number of whole Bibles which her people bought from the Society. The beginning of hostilities within her borders, in 1937, had no appreciable effect upon this growth. The continuance of the war increased interest in 1938. In 1939 the number of whole

Bibles purchased in China was almost double that of 1937.

The Society’s total distribution for 1939 was most encouraging. Every District office, with but one exception and that one slight, as well as the Agency among the Colored People, reported an increase in its circulation. Likewise overseas, except in Japan where internal affairs

are disturbed, and men, materials, and money, scarce for anything but war, every Agency reported increased distribution. West Indies, Brazil, and Chile are rejoicing in the fact that 1939 was their banner year. “This awakening is no spasmodic, intermittent manifestation, here today and gone tomorrow,” writes the Society’s Agent in Brazil. “It is a new consciousness of the fundamental worth



This Japanese woman pauses in the midst of a day's toil to consider the Gospel

of the Bible and its message for a world in dire need.”

The Society’s total distribution for the year was 7,370,908 volumes—which is an increase of five percent over that of 1938. This total, though encouraging, by no means represents the increased demand.

Only the Society's budgetary limitations keep it from being much greater.

This issue of the *Bible Society Record*, which carries for the most part a review of the Society's work in 1939, is dedicated to the countless and oft-forgotten people in the world who do not possess the Scriptures in any form. As last year the *Annual Report* of the Society was dedicated to the colporteur,—the man with the Book,—this year it seeks to bring into view the wistful man whom the colporteur faces—the man without the Book; the man without so many things in which he once felt so secure; the man who feels, in his present plight, that there are no anchors left in life: that the world is drifting, drifting ever toward the whirlpools of still more frightful disaster; the man who no longer hears the voices of assurance that once came to him from settled ways of living he thought unchangeable. Let us then look into the face of the man who is turning to the Word, who hears in its unchanging accents what at last he finds to be the positive answer to his own and the world's despair.

Not that the Society has never faced this man before—from the start it has faced him. This man without the Book has symbolized the ap-

palling need that brought the Society into being one hundred and twenty-four years ago. His plight it was that established the first Foreign Agency in 1836, and the work for the blind a year earlier. It is his wondering, half-distrustful look that keeps translators' and revisers' lamps burning far into the night, and the feet of the messengers of peace trudging over the highways and byways of forty countries, to bring the glad tidings of One who saves unto the uttermost.

The man without the Book,—there are hundreds of millions who have never even heard of the Book. But where the man without the Book has heard of it, his one-time scorn is not so evident; his indifference is giving way to the spirit of inquiry, and his troubled soul is a bit more disposed to wonder if here, after all, in this book he may have spurned before, is not the answer to the deepest questions he has ever asked himself.

Beginning on the inside of the front cover of this issue and continuing on pages 83, 84, 85 and 86, will be found gleanings from the reports of the Society's work around the world, indicating that there is a widespread "Turning to the Word."

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Hearty Thanks

IT required almost \$900,000 for the American Bible Society to operate in 1939. Where this money came from and how it was spent is graphically told in the accompanying chart. In this review of the year's work the officers wish to convey, in behalf of the Society, their hearty thanks for continuing support on the part of the churches, auxiliary societies, and the thousands of individuals who, in one way or another, have remembered the Society during the year.

There are three principal kinds of income on which the Society depends. About one third is derived from the sale of its books and returns from Scriptures donated. If, however, the reader will glance at the summary of the 1939 budget, it will be seen that, because of the Society's principle of selling all books at cost or less, the publication expense exceeded the returns from

the sale of books by over \$24,000. This factor is always anticipated, however, in the building of the Society's budgets. Hearty thanks to all who helped to sell the books and to those who paid either the cost or whatever they could afford; for by their hands was the basic aim of the Society to "encourage the wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures" carried forward.

A second kind of income—in 1939 something less than a third—came from living donors either through their churches, auxiliary Bible societies, or as individuals' gifts. It will be seen from the General Budget Income table that the gifts from these sources in each instance slightly exceeded the estimates. Hearty thanks to the administrators, pastors, and promoters of the Bible cause in the churches, to the faithful workers in the auxiliaries, and to the 27,000 staunch supporters who sent their individual

contributions during 1939 to the Bible House.

A third kind of income, amounting to almost four tenths of the total, comes from gifts made by donors in former years; from those who remembered the Society in their wills, set up trust funds or took out annuity agreements with the Society. Hearty thanks again to those who, in planning their affairs, have found in the Society a channel through which they may continue to be good stewards of Jesus Christ through many years to come.

These indications of increasing support are most enheartening, for the Society can take no less than a world-view of its task. The year 1939 brought war in Europe. To the cause of Scripture distribution throughout the world this means a crippling of the work of the Society's sister organization—the British and Foreign Bible Society. At the close of the year it was revealed that the British and Foreign Bible Society was forced to cut its budget for foreign work in 1940 by \$76,000. Much of this work is done in cooperation with American missions, especially in India, Korea, and Africa. Bible lovers in America must rise to the challenge of these sober facts in the current year and possibly for many years to come.

Anticipating these and the already unmet demands in the Society's own fields, particularly Latin America, the Board of Managers adopted during 1939 a forward movement program, which calls for an annual increase of \$50,000

from living donors during each of the next four years, so that by the close of 1944 the total giving from churches, individuals, and auxiliaries will have risen from \$235,000 to \$435,000 annually.

General Budget Income

	Estimated 1939	Received 1939	Average Receipts 1921-1930
Churches	\$115,000.00	\$116,343.23	\$234,133.02
Individuals	106,500.00	113,115.11	138,864.22
Auxiliaries	14,000.00	14,138.56	20,046.99
Legal Trusts and Unrestricted Investments	130,000.00	122,034.35	118,797.43
Legacies	130,000.00	130,000.00	66,493.34
Annuities Terminated	70,000.00	70,000.00	18,823.43
Bible House			39,854.79
Miscellaneous	2,000.00	1,336.08	2,627.78
Total	\$567,500.00	\$566,967.33	\$639,641.00

General Budget Charges

	Appropriation 1939	Charges 1939	Average Charges 1921-1930
General Administration	\$60,311.00	\$59,354.84	\$72,968.41
Treasurer's Office	16,923.00	16,315.89	24,412.29
Ways and Means	61,960.00	64,046.28	70,777.36
General Distribution (excluding Blind)	61,158.00	54,157.93	58,511.70
Home Districts and Divisions	135,678.00	133,828.00	149,861.70
Foreign Agencies	231,470.00	221,219.70	276,437.28
Total (excluding Blind)	\$567,500.00	\$548,922.64	\$652,968.74

Summary of 1939 Budget

	Estimated	Received	Expended
General Budget	\$567,500.00	\$566,967.33	\$548,922.64
Publication Department	275,000.00	268,416.49	292,949.26
Income for Blind	8,000.00	7,349.77	8,099.48
Total	\$850,500.00	\$842,733.59	\$849,971.38

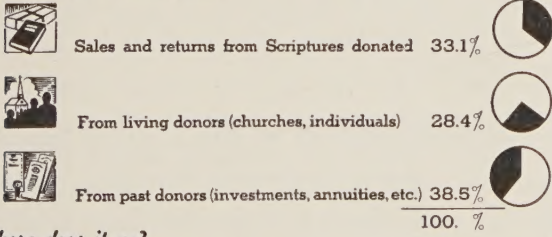
Income from Churches

	1939		1938	
	Contri- butions per 1,000 Members*	Contri- butions per Church	Total Contri- butions	
Adventists, 7th Day	\$9.80	\$0.59	\$1,488	\$ †1
Assemblies of God	2.27	.11	403	300
Baptist, Northern	1.17	.23	1,760	1,395
Baptist, Southern .....	.15	.027	671	616
Brethren	9.93	1.58	278	333
Christian and Missionary Alliance	5.93	.40	190	42
Church of God .....	.03	.001	2	29
Congregational and Christian Disciples of Christ	2.92	.48	2,936	2,862
Evangelical .....	.75	.14	1,116	1,077
Evangelical and Reformed ..	.66	.07	141	200
Lutheran, American	1.65	.37	1,077	1,101
Lutheran, Augustana	1.74	.34	634	652
Lutheran, Missouri	8.00	1.68	2,026	1,772
Lutheran, Norwegian .....	.38	.06	334	238
Lutheran, United	3.64	.46	1,248	1,270
Mennonite	2.71	.83	3,096	3,489
Methodist Episcopal	2.37	.29	114	266
Methodist Episcopal, South ..	\$10.05	\$1.64	\$38,596	\$39,709
Methodist Epis., African	5.23	.80	13,057	12,141
Methodist Epis., Colored	2.81	.23	1,639	1,740
Methodist, Free .....	.79	.09	415	647
Methodist, Primitive .....	.76	.06	228	239
Methodist Protestant	1.70	.06	78	70
Moravian, North	14.72	1.95	162	6
Moravian, South	1.24	.10	230	227
Nazarene	25.58	4.98	742	580
Presbyterian, U.S.	3.40	.19	452	618
Presbyterian, U.S.A.	20.19	2.71	9,287	9,225
Presbyterian, Assoc. Reformed ..	11.48	2.58	22,707	22,246
Presbyterian, Covenanter	3.35	.57	67	106
Presbyterian, Cumberland ..	86.14	6.21	603	677
Presbyterian, United	3.85	.23	254	247
Protestant Episcopal	14.14	2.82	2,433	2,560
Reformed, Christian .....	.61	.11	841	1,218
Reformed in America	19.28	4.01	1,176	1,401
United Brethren in Christ ..	23.42	5.05	3,677	3,659
Miscellaneous .....	.96	.12	362	427
Total			\$116,352	\$114,759

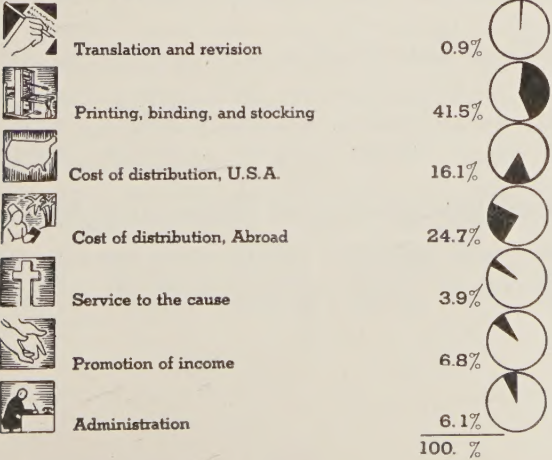
* 13 years of age and over.
† Gift for two-year period received in 1939.
‡ \$40,000 gross receipts.

THE AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY DOLLAR
(Annual Budget is nearly \$900,000)

Where does it come from?



Where does it go?



Battling the Barriers of Language

IT is estimated that nine tenths of the 2,000,000,000 people in the world might now, if they turned to God's Word, hear it read in a language they understand. Behind this amazing fact lies one of the greatest achievements of Christian missions. The work of translation and revision goes forward with no abatement of energy. Since the founding of the Bible Societies at the beginning of the nineteenth century, some part of the Scriptures has been entering a new language at the rate of one every few weeks. The eighteen new languages added to the list in 1939 brought it to a total of 1,039 languages into which some parts of the Scriptures have been translated and published.

The Society rejoiced during the year in seeing a part of the Scriptures appear for the first time in two languages in the Philippines,—the Gospel of St. John in Cuyono, and that of St. Mark in the Zambali,—and in two languages in China,—the Gospel of St. Luke in Kado, and the New Testament in Hwa Lisu. Work is progressing in twelve other languages. Notable among the completed tasks of the year was the delivery, at Christmas time, of the first shipment of New



Revising the Panayan Bible—Philippines

Testaments to the Mam Indians in Guatemala.

The Society's historical collection of printed Scriptures now contains over 9,000 volumes in 819 different languages. There were cataloged during the year 711 parts of the Scriptures in 184 languages and dialects.

During the year the Society did work in 184 languages and characters, including the different systems for the blind.

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Books and People

THE operations of the American Bible Society may be described in terms of books and people—people preparing books, translations; proofreaders, compositors, printers, binders, shippers, and all the hundreds of those who work at the depositaries, Bible Houses and area offices, and along the countless trails where colporteurs, correspondents, and volunteers take the Scriptures to the world of need: people with books in their hands, books to be, books in the making, completed books offered to an anxious, groping, disillusioned world. From month to month the *Bible Society Record* seeks to tell its readers, of these people with their blessed books. As we review the past year, we present some summaries that indicate the scope of the work around the world.

Distribution both in the homeland and abroad

exceeded that of 1938, and could have been much greater had the funds been available. The figures follow:

Total Distribution in the United States

	<i>Bibles</i>	<i>Testaments</i>	<i>Portions</i>	<i>Total</i>
1939	198,351	323,505	3,259,273	3,781,129
1938	171,094	283,426	2,916,043	3,370,563
1937	168,492	269,254	2,893,721	3,331,467

Total Distribution in Foreign Lands

1939	182,724	194,940	3,212,115	3,589,779
1938	141,881	249,301	3,209,012	3,600,194
1937	136,045	185,406	3,668,356	3,989,807

Total Distribution at Home and Abroad

1939	381,075	518,445	6,471,388	7,370,908
1938	312,975	532,727	6,125,055	6,970,757
1937	304,537	454,660	6,562,077	7,321,274

The Society's workers were, as will be seen by the figures that follow, mostly volunteers—a correspondent being a pastor, a missionary or other Christian worker who desires to include in his activities the sowing of the seed of the gospel. The following table shows the workers by classes for 1938 and 1939.

	1939			1938		
	In the U. S.	Abroad	Total	In the U. S.	Abroad	Total
District and Division Secretaries	14	12	26	14	12	26
Subagents	..	20	20	..	22	22
Colporteurs	12	365	377	13	418	431
Correspondents	947	848	1,795	877	917	1,794
Volunteers	660	298	958	582	402	984
Office Workers	24	70	94	30	76	106
Home Office	67	..	67	62	..	62
	1,724	1,613	3,337	1,578	1,947	3,425

While hundreds of thousands of people were feverishly making munitions during 1939, the Society was speeding up its publication schedule. The number of books issued from the Bible House in New York was 4,993,226, the largest number since 1930. Likewise abroad, the number of books published was the largest in



Folding New Testament pages in Philippines Publishing House

recent years, reaching a total of 5,761,501. Outside the United States the work was done in London, Glasgow, Beirut, Cairo, Bangkok, Manila, Hankow, Chengtu, Shanghai, and Tokyo. The grand total for the year was 10,754,727. The corresponding total for 1938 was 8,678,598.

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Little Indians and the Big Book

By Carolyn Davidson

A VISITOR to a certain small Indian community, one day last summer, might have been surprised to hear the strains of a hymn pouring from the windows of the log dance hall on the edge of the town. He would have been still more amazed, if he had looked in, to find the hall filled with bright-eyed Indian children, and to recognize the gathering as a daily vacation Bible school in full swing.

A Bible school in a dance hall? It sounds queer, but not to Miss Dorothy Pitman, of the Friends' Indian Mission in northern Oklahoma, who thinks nothing of holding Bible schools in tents, in brush arbors, and even in the open air, when no church or schoolhouse is available. All summer long, she travels through the rural districts, stopping for two weeks or a month in each small community. Often it is a mere "spot on the road," where only a dilapidated store indicates that here is some sort of center for the Indian families whose homes are hidden in the surrounding hills. But they come, those Indian children—big ones and little ones, from preschool up to high-school age. "Some walk

long distances," says Miss Pitman. "In one place a boy rode horseback five miles every morning to attend; others had to swim their horses over a swollen creek. Some move in with relatives who live close by. Some defy their parents and endure whippings, in order to come. They love the Bible stories, the hymns, the games and handwork."

To an Indian child, descendant of generations of native craftsmen, art work of any kind offers irresistible fascination. No white child—Miss Pitman says—can compete with them when it comes to beauty of design and neatness of execution. They love to embroider the Ten Commandments or a favorite Bible verse on a colored card; to make pretty things out of fruit jars and tin and paper for their own houses. In Wyandotte, Oklahoma, where the business men of the town (total population 200!) offered to pay all the expenses of the school if the Friends would furnish teachers, the boys set up a carpenter shop and learned to make furniture for their homes. They carry other things home with them too. A little girl, too shy at first to

take part in the classes, was discovered some weeks later solemnly expounding the Ten Commandments to the man who was painting her house. When Miss Pitman went to investigate the home environment of a small boy, whose constant profanity was having a bad effect on the other children, his mother said: "Yes, I know he swears; he learns it from his father. But last night he told his father they had both better stop, because the Bible school lady said it was wrong—and they are going to try!" Often a child brings to church a family that has never attended religious services before.

Now, after a dozen years of service, Miss Pitman is beginning to see permanent results of her labors. "Ten years ago," she writes, "the American Bible Society sent us a box of Bibles. Some of them are still in use in the church school at Wyandotte; others were 'earned' by the children. We made out our own lists of passages to be memorized, and unwittingly made the requirements rather stiff for Indian



Indian Christian girl in tribal costume

children. However, some of them, who came to us from the government school a quarter of a mile away, were as eager as the children in the community to earn Bibles, and were among the first to do so. One girl earned her own Bible, then asked for additional passages to learn, so that she could earn a Bible for her mother's

birthday present. You can imagine how proud she was when she presented it!

"The ones most interested were girls who had accepted Christ at Easter time the year previous. We met on a sunny slope near the school, a little band of twelve girls and I, for a quiet talk on what it meant to be a follower of Christ, and what was expected of Christians. One by one they gave their hearts to Him and offered brief, somewhat halting, but very sincere prayers. They organized into a 'Sunshine Club,' which met once a week for Bible study and practical application of Bible truths. I met one of these girls last month while attending special services at Council House, close to her home. She sat near the front, holding her baby boy in her arms, her face alight with interest in the message. In spite of the handicap of an unsympathetic husband, her Christian experience is a vital, living thing. Twelve years ago, the Friends workers from the various Indian centers in Oklahoma held their first 'Shaw-o-se-ki' camp for Indian girls. The name is taken from the first few letters of the names of the tribes represented there: Shawnee, Wyandotte, Osage, Seneca, and Kickapoo. Bible study held the most important place in our daily schedule. Only last month, one of these girls, now married, came to visit me, and recalled with enthusiasm and appreciation this camp she had attended twelve years before.

"This year, at Hominy, among the Osages, I held pre-Easter meetings each night, beginning Palm Sunday and continuing through the week. We brought our Bibles and studied a day-by-day account of Christ's last week. Although it was originally planned especially for adults, children were in the majority nearly every night, sitting with open Bibles in their laps and searching diligently for passages referred to. Some of the Old Testament prophecies were included, so they had some good practice in finding book, chapter, and verse. One girl brought a newly purchased family Bible to use, and she was very proud of it. On the last night of our study, a mother with two girls came forward to take their stand as Christians, and, although no emotional appeal was made, tears were in their eyes and deep sincerity in their voices as they made their profession of faith. The power of God's Word is the same in every age, with every generation!"

He Speaks for Christ in Three Tongues

REGULAR readers of the *Record* may remember the article "Making Himself Useful to His Master," published in the January 1938 issue. It told the story of a young Filipino, Leoncio B. Siapno, who came from Hawaii to study at the John Brown University in Arkansas, and for whom the Dallas office of the American Bible Society secured a Bible in his own Pangasinan dialect.

Later that year, the Bible Society supplied him with Bibles in two other Filipino dialects; for he wrote that he was studying Tagalog and Ilocano as well, in preparation for Christian work among his own people. "I have seen many people in Hawaii who are without God," wrote Mr. Siapno; "I love the Lord Jesus Christ, and I hope he will use me."

That prayer is being answered; for, only a few weeks ago, a letter came to the Dallas office from Honolulu, telling how this young man has indeed returned to the islands, and is laboring for the conversion of his own people. "It is my great opportunity," he writes. "Being able to speak and write the three Filipino dialects, my three Filipino Bibles have greatly helped me with my Christian work among the different tribes of the sixty-five thousand Filipino immi-



Mr. Siapno explaining John 3: 16 on a park bench

grants in Hawaii. The little I earn is barely sufficient to pay my living expenses, with the most rigid economy, and I still owe some money for my education; but I am glad that my humble and personal work for Christ means so much to those who are without God."

Not only has Mr. Siapno been teaching in the Kakaako Mission, but much of his time is spent in fruitful personal work among the hundreds of Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Filipinos, and native Hawaiians who congregate daily in Aala Park, the beautiful tropical garden which is a favorite gathering place for all Honolulu. Many a homesick Filipino hears of Christ for the first time when Mr. Siapno reads to him in his own dialect from one of the three Filipino Bibles.

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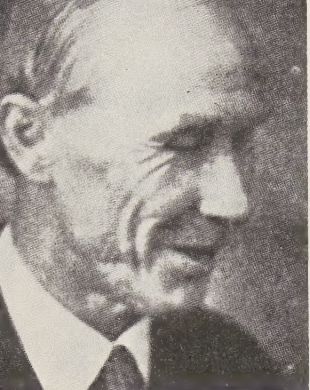
Giving the Bible the Right of Way

An Honorary Vice President of the American Bible Society testifies, after more than fifty years of experience, to the joy and satisfaction of personal service as a Scripture distributor

By Rev. Jacob C. Leonard, D.D.

I HAVE lived all my long life in one place —Lexington, North Carolina. It has been for years my practice to distribute here in my city, Bibles, Testaments, and portions to both white and colored people in all walks of life. I recall one Christmas morning, many years ago, when I went out on the street to hand Gospels to anyone I might meet. The

first person was the president of a cotton mill. Of course, he had many Bibles in his beautiful home; but I could tell that his word of thanks for the little Gospel I gave him was from his heart. The second man was an old slave of days gone by, whom I had known when I was a small boy. I asked him whether he had given his heart to Jesus. The tears came to



Dixie Sharpe

his eyes, and he said that he had not, but that he wanted to. We had a word of quiet prayer there on the street that Christmas morning, and he made the sincere surrender. From that day he lived a beautiful Christian life, and died

a happy servant of the Lord.

Dixie Sharpe pictured here was an underprivileged blind lad when I found him. He had no education and little hope. I persuaded his people to let him go to the state school for the blind. There he learned to read with his fingers. How happy he was. The American Bible Society furnished me with a complete Braille Bible for Dixie. I discovered that he

had some musical gifts, and under limited training he acquired ability to become organist at his church—a position which he still holds after more than twenty-four years.

Some years ago I was asked to organize the boys and girls of our orphans' home into a church and become their pastor, in addition to my regular pastorate. There were twenty charter members. In seven years the membership grew to 240. I attribute the result to the definite use, under God, of the Holy Bible, more than to all other influences combined.

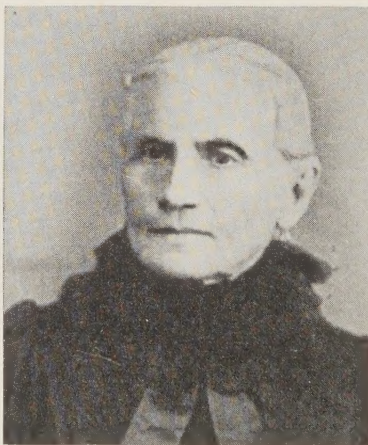
Everywhere I have been asked to serve, I have made a practice of distributing God's Word—in hospitals, Sunday schools, vacation schools, and catechetical classes. Seldom have I found this service given in vain. I believe that, if we give the Bible the right of way, it will accomplish that for which it was sent.

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Again—What a Single Bible Did

A WORN Spanish Bible recently appeared in the Society's Library that calls to memory the power of a single copy of the Bible placed in responsive hands.

Nearly one hundred years ago, in 1847, during the war with Mexico, some soldiers gave a Spanish Bible to a young woman in Matamoros, just south of the Rio Grande. Señora Josefa Mora was so interested and delighted with the book, that she read it aloud to all who would listen. The impression created by this reading alarmed the bishop of the district, who persuaded other members of her family to take the book from her and burn it. Sometime later the soldiers returned, and, learning of her sorrow over the loss of the Bible, gave her another copy, which she continued to read, but hid in a hollow tree near her house. As there was no religious service in Matamoros where her Bible could be used, Señora Mora moved across the river to Brownsville, where she became an active member of the Presbyterian Church. Nearly twenty years later the Reverend Anthony



Señora Mora

Thomas Graybill, of the Southern Presbyterian Church, went to Matamoros to undertake missionary work. When she heard of this, Señora Mora moved back to Matamoros with her son, Leandro Garzo Mora. Señor Mora, being adept both in Spanish and English, began to teach Mr. Graybill Spanish, and in turn received instruction in religion, so that he was ordained in 1879,—the first member and the first minister of the Presbyterian Church in the northern part of Mexico.

For the next twenty-six years Señora Mora worked with the ministers in that part of Mexico, being called "the mother of the Presbytery of Tamaulipas." A daughter married another Mexican minister.

The second Bible that the soldiers gave Señora Mora—the one she hid in a tree—is now in a library in Philadelphia; the one in the Bible House collection being a later acquisition, printed by the Society in 1856, but with her inscription on the flyleaf. Inserted in it are excellent photographs of Señora Mora and her son.

(Continued from page 74)

test in Bible reading. A whole community turned hopefully toward the Word.

The Deep South is possibly the most Bible-loving section of the country, where those without the Book are likely to turn to it with least persuasion. There is, nevertheless, much to be done. An evangelist, who delights to give the Scriptures to the less fortunate, writes, "During the past nine months I have preached in three churches in Mississippi, six in Alabama, seventeen in Tennessee, nine in Georgia, thirty-one in Florida, and two in South Carolina, as well as out under the trees. During this time I have preached 221 times, driven 13,000 miles, sleeping in my missionary car more than 200 nights. I have distributed 18,000 New Testaments. My faithful Ford has done 111,000 miles and still runs fine. To the Lord be all the praise!"

The transforming effect upon church people themselves, when they turn more studiously to the Word, was observed by Secretary McLaughlin and his workers in Chicago and elsewhere on their field. Whereas many churches are without Bibles in either the pews or the Sunday school, and consequently lack spiritual growth and power, others are deliberately making wide use of the Bible with overwhelming results. One church, which began twenty years ago with twenty-four members, now has a membership of 5,000, of whom ninety percent have regular daily devotions in their homes, having been patiently taught to follow this practice by their pastor, who preaches expository sermons to three crowded congregations every Sunday morning.

In a greater turning to the Word within the churches evidently lies the possibility of a gracious revival in our country.

The story of any year of the Society's work takes the reader into many places of which he never knew or thought before. Here are the "back stretches" of southern Louisiana, where many of the people cannot read at all, and still more can understand only their peculiar brand of "Cajun" French. Of these people Secretary Morgan sends a report from his faithful distributors, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Duchesneau. One night these two consecrated helpers went far out into the country, to visit a group of French Catholics who had sent word that they were interested in the Bible. They listened eagerly while Mr. Duchesneau read from a French Bible, and begged him to come again. He offered to leave the Bible with them, but they shook their heads, sadly saying, "Not one of us knows how to read a word. Our children have learned to read only English, and we understand only French. What good is a Bible in any language to us?" For such as these the Duchesneaus have organized a Bible Class, meeting weekly, where they can not only hear the Bible read in their own language, but can also learn to read it for themselves.

From the vast area served by the Rocky Mountain District a field man reports: "I stopped at a filling station in the salt desert, fifty miles from the nearest habitation. When the young man, the only attendant at the station, told me how lonely he was, I offered him a number of tracts. Imagine my

surprise when he refused them, with the curt remark that he had been taught to trust the teaching of those only who were competent to give spiritual instruction. I then offered him a Gospel of St. John, which he eagerly accepted, saying 'Sure, I'll take that. That's the Bible, ain't it? Why don't you fellows offer a guy the Bible?' As I resumed my journey, I couldn't help wondering why we don't."

Secretary Bayless reports that guests from sixty-two countries visited the Society's booth, at the Golden Gate Exposition.

"Lady, you are in the biggest business in the world," said one visitor to the young woman in attendance at the booth. "After spending fifty years in Rhodesia as an engineer, I tell you there is nothing to compare with the power of the gospel in transforming human life."

An employee of the Exposition management stopped and said, "For the past four months this exhibit has been bothering me. Every time I pass, it says, 'Secure a Bible and study Christ for yourself.' I have been a so-called Christian for many years, but now I want to become one in reality through Bible study."

Among Our Colored Neighbors

The Haven Memorial Agency among the Colored People of the United States lost during the year the dean of its four Secretaries, Dr. M. L. Vaughters of the Dallas Division, whose work, however, has been valiantly carried through to the end of the year by his helpers.

In the Charlotte Division a number of business and professional men, both white and colored, became interested in

placing Gospel portions in parked cars, each portion bearing the name and address of the sponsor. One of these portions was left in a taxicab. Several days later a young man came to Secretary Tross' office. With tears in his eyes, he took the Gospel from his pocket and said, "See this little book? It is not a check book, and you see it is not a revolver; but it saved my life and the life of my family. When this book was thrown into the taxi in which I sat waiting for the driver, I had a gun in one pocket, and a bottle of whiskey in the other. I was through with everything and everybody. It was wholesale murder for my family and suicide for me; but when I opened this book, the first thing I read was this: 'Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' A new light came to me. I see things differently now, and I am solving all my problems. I thank you for what I found in that car."

Service to the Blind

"Will you please send me a catalogue of prices on Bibles," writes one of the Society's blind friends. "Although I am blind, I am superintendent of a lively little Methodist Sunday School. We have been running a campaign for regular attendance, and have promised Bibles as awards. I also want to get the price of the complete Old Testament in Braille Grade 1½ or 2. I have the New Testament, and have read it through so many times I almost know it from memory."

The year was marked by a forward step in the Society's service to the blind in the supplying in Portuguese Braille

for Brazil of the Gospels of St. Mark and St. John and the Books of Acts and Psalms. Hitherto there had been available in Brazil only the Gospels of St. Mark and St. John made from plates that had since been worn out. The first shipment of the new books arrived in Rio de Janeiro in February.

In Latin America

So great is the turning to the Word in the Latin American countries, that the Society is able to meet only one half to two thirds of the demand. Space permits of only a glimpse from the six Agencies.

Notable in the annals of the West Indies Agency was the visit by the ex-President of the late Spanish Republic, Sr. Diego Martinez Barrio, granted asylum by the government to reside in Cuba before leaving for Mexico. In the Society's guest book he wrote, as translated by Dr. Dorado—"Outstanding in the propaganda of the American Bible Society is the spirit of *service, probity, and candor*, the virtues most essential and noteworthy of Christianity, as a school of morality and regeneration. A wholesome contrast of activities between the Christian purpose of *educating* mankind and the pagan purpose of *enslaving* them."

The Bible House at Cristobal headquarters of the Caribbean

Agency bears eloquent testimony to the Holy Scriptures as an answer to the world's need. One visitor said that it stands at this busy commercial and maritime center as a monument to the truth that "man does not live by bread alone." Cristobal is one of the great ports of the world and a center of international trade routes. Races from all points of the compass freely mix on its streets. Foreign accents are heard on all sides. Seventy percent of Cristobal's inhabitants are foreigners. Hindus, Armenians, Turks, Persians, Syrians, Chinese, Japanese, Greeks, Americans, Europeans, West Indians, and South and Central Americans,—they are all found there. Little wonder that Mr. Gregory sold Scriptures to the extent of ten or more copies in fifteen languages last year.

That disaster turns people toward the Word of God was amply demonstrated in Chile during 1939. In January this prosperous coastal country suffered the worst earthquake in the history of South America. Juan Palma, the Agency's colporteur at Chillan, passed through the terrible experience. His house came tumbling down while he and his family were in bed. Fortunately, all escaped. For days they lived in a tent at the foot of the garden. After several weeks of rest and time given to rebuild his house,

The Bible House at Cristobal



Señor Palma continued his work and, in spite of the devastation and poverty resulting from the earthquake, he trebled his sales of the previous year. Those who suffered so greatly were disposed to give consideration to the message of hope in the gospel of Christ. Indeed, the total circulation in Chile was almost twice that of the year 1936, when the British and the American Bible Societies entered into their joint operations in this important country.

The La Plata Agency has an active correspondent in the far northern Argentine state of Formosa. He is very enthusiastic about his work and, during the year, set out to visit every home in his native city of Laguna Blanca, where he was accused by a local priest of being insane. He was arrested and detained for several days, but kept right on with his work among the prison officials and his fellow unfortunates. At last the chief of police sent for him, heard his testimony, and ordered his release, saying, "I wish there were more crazy people like you."

In the Near East

It was difficult to turn to the Bible in some parts of the Bible Lands during 1939. In Greece, for instance, the government and the Holy Synod of the Greek Church issued and enforced a decree prohibiting the sale of Scriptures in Modern Greek, and restricting their circulation to the Ancient Greek text. This was done in spite of the fact that the Modern Greek translation has been in circulation for decades with the approval of many of the leaders of the Greek Church, and has

far exceeded in recent years the circulation of the Ancient text. This amazing decision has its roots in matters political and ecclesiastical, and is counter, of course, to the convictions of Bible lovers, who believe the Holy Scriptures were given for the use and understanding of the humblest believer. In Turkey, circulation of the Word fell because of enforced prohibitions against colportage in Asia Minor; in Syria, however, and in Palestine there was a fine increase. The Society's office at Beirut continues to be the principal source of supply for Arabic Scriptures.

In the Far East

Siam is now called Thailand. To this old, old country, with its new name meaning "The Land of the Free," there came during 1939, significantly enough, a great releasing spiritual revival, which resulted in a demand for the Scriptures exceeding that of any year since the policy was instituted, identical with that followed elsewhere, of selling rather than donating the Gospel portions.

Meanwhile Secretary Franklin has been putting in long extra hours with a revision committee that is bringing the Old Testament text into harmony with modern Thai, and preparing to print it in a new form of type which will make the Book far less bulky and less costly to produce.

China's turning to the Bible in the devastating emergency created by the present invasion of her country is one of the most encouraging facts in modern missionary annals. For many years China has absorbed millions of the Society's inex-



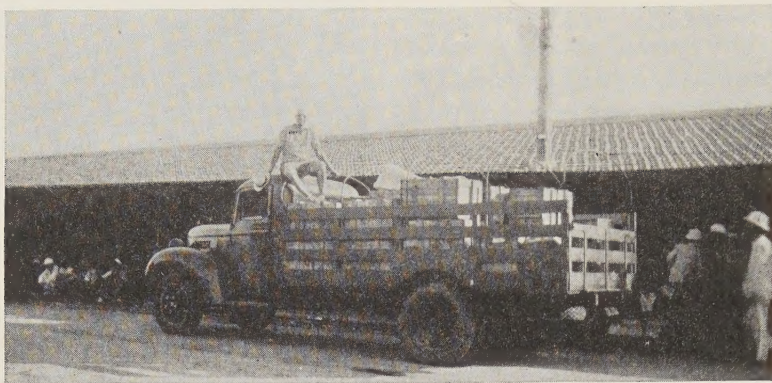
Colporteur Christoff at work on the street in Sofia

pensive portions and a relatively small though gradually increasing number of Testaments and Bibles. When, in 1937, the blow fell upon Shanghai where most of the printing was done, there was a forced decrease at the point of supply.

There followed months of disorganized transportation and many other difficulties; but, nevertheless, in the sale of both Bibles and Testaments, the year 1938 surpassed any other year in the history of the Society's work in China. Then came the occupation and consequent impoverishment of the eastern provinces and the closing of all but one of the entrances to free China—but 1939 records the sale of whole Bibles equalling almost twice the number distributed in 1937!

China's determination to build her united nation while she holds the foe at bay, is reflected in her growing loyalty to the Scriptures.

Recent issues of the *Bible Society Record* have carried stories of the two truck caravans conveying tons of Bibles to Chungking by way of Haiphong in French Indo-China; yet so definitely is free China



A truckload of Bibles at the Haiphong customs shed

turning to the Word, that a friend wrote late in the year, saying, "For all of those truckloads of Scriptures which the Bible Society has brought out here, we are still unable to buy a Bible in this city." Meanwhile, at headquarters in Shanghai, Dr. Lacy reported at the end of October that the presses and binderies were unable to keep up with the de-

mand, and there were unfilled orders for 35,000 books.

When we turn to Japan, we turn to a nation where the Christian gospel, though it has been preached there for nearly seventy years, has never penetrated deeply nor spread widely. Today Japan is saddened and bewildered by a bloody war that goes on and on with no apparent results. Living costs

have risen. An acute shortage of paper and binding materials has curtailed the production of books. "Our shelves have never been so empty for so long a time since the Bible House was built," writes Secretary Vinall.

Yet, against this picture, we must set thirty-five valiant men who, during the year, distributed hundreds of thousands of volumes of Scripture, mostly at the homes of people who would otherwise never have had an opportunity of obtaining the Bible for themselves. The records of these colporteurs reveal that copies of the Scriptures were purchased in just one third of the homes visited—a remarkably high proportion. In many of these homes anxiety and sorrow lie heavy on perplexed hearts, to whom the authoritative words of the Comforter must have brought great blessing.

• • •

But—How about Reading the Bible?

BECAUSE the Bible can never be used until it is made available, the first concern of the American Bible Society is,—to quote Article I of its Constitution,—“to encourage the wider circulation of the Holy Scriptures.” This emphasis has sometimes led to anxious queries on the part of friends of the Society as to how much use is made of the millions of copies of God’s Word which are annually distributed throughout the world. In view of the evident disuse of the Bible in so many American homes, it is interesting to note that, as a result of studies recently made at the Bible House, it was discovered that, in the last eight years, the American

Bible Society has published and distributed 11,500,000 pieces of literature for this very purpose. The distribution of this literature was not one of a wholesale nature, such as including some little leaflet in every piece of mail, but was, for the most part, sent out on request, the cost of printing and mailing of much of it being met by those asking for it. A list of the titles of these various pieces of literature would reveal the widest variety, ranging all the way from the simple little leaflet entitled “Where to Look in the Bible,” of which 2,250,000 has been published, to scholarly treatments of the history and influence of the English Bible for Sunday-school leaders.

There is a positive conviction shared by all the workers at the Bible House that, in the face of the desperate needs of the world today, the American people are turning toward the Bible with fresh hope. Although it is chiefly the responsibility of pastors, parents, Sunday-school teachers, missionaries and others, to give guidance in the use of the Bible, the American Bible Society will continue and improve its services to this end. Many of the helps the Society has offered through the years are still available. Forthcoming issues of the *Bible Society Record* will announce the new materials as soon as they are ready for distribution.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

BIBLE SOCIETY RECORD

*A Journal Dedicated to the Wider
Distribution of the Holy
Scriptures*

Editors: THE SECRETARIES

Address correspondence to Francis
Carr Stifler, Editorial Secretary,
Bible House, Park Avenue and
57th Street, New York



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THE next issue of the *Bible Society Record* will appear about July first. As in former years, there will be no issue in June or August. The September issue will appear late in August.

April Meeting of the Board

THE twelfth stated meeting of the Board of Managers of the American Bible Society in its one hundred and twenty-fourth year was held at the Bible House, Park Avenue and 57th Street, New York, on Thursday, April 4, 1940, at 3:30 p. m., President John T. Manson in the chair.

Devotional exercises were conducted by Associate Secretary Betts.

The minutes of the eleventh stated meeting of the year were approved.

The following memorial minute was adopted:

Doctor John Huston Finley

The American Bible Society mourns the loss on March 7, 1940, of a beloved friend—Doctor John Huston Finley.

From his earliest days Doctor Finley was concerned with the life of the spirit and the search for truth. He seldom spoke or wrote without using some such phrase as "the Scriptures remind us that truth can not be got for gold alone, whatever the degree of fineness, even pure gold, either for ourselves or for our children." He was ever concerned that education, whether for children or for older persons,

should be based on religious reality. Nothing annoyed him more than to have to admit that "there are areas in the world at the moment which are seeking, through a regimented existence, to establish an order of society from which the Creator of the earth is officially banished." He would always add, "But this can not be endured."

This Board thinks of John Finley as a personal comrade, who always revealed his inner nature through constant acts of friendliness; standing upon the heights, as it were, with his marvelous "cosmic consciousness"; and yet, always saying, "Gravitation as a force can not transcend love; for love is incomparably more effective, more forceful, than any physical force, lying as it does at the very root of the universe." He insisted that "mathematics and faith alone could cross the borders of the finite into the infinite." He thought of education as a process by which the individual related himself to this universe, gave himself citizenship in the world, shared the race's mind, and enfranchised his own soul.

No tribute of affection to our friend would be complete unless we accepted the definition of education which he made his: "To be seeing the world made new every morning, as if it were the morning of the first day, and then to make the most of it for the individual soul, as if it were the last day—this is the daily curriculum of the mind's desire." We shall not soon again have in our midst such an educator, such a poet, such a sage.

His personal devotion to the Bible, appearing in his daily reading for many years and in his standards of life, was reflected also in many services to the Bible Society, especially in his wise counsel during the Commemoration of the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Printed English Bible; his share in the formal presentation of an Arabic Bible to his warm friend, General Allenby; the observance of Bible Society day at the New York World's Fair, and in his eagerness to encourage the reading of the Scriptures by promoting a "brotherhood of the Book."

The Board of Managers of the American Bible Society places on record its deep sense of loss in the death of Doctor Finley, a Vice President of the Society since 1928, and directs that this minute be spread upon the records of the Society and that a copy thereof, together with a letter of deep sympathy, be sent to Mrs. Finley and to the members of her family.

The Secretary was requested to forward the following resolution to the Chicago Bible Society, which is celebrating its centennial anniversary:

The Board of Managers of the American Bible Society, by resolution adopted April 4, 1940, extends to the Chicago Bible Society, its officers and managers, its secretary and staff, and its supporters and friends, warm congratulations on the centennial anniversary of the incorporation of the Chicago Bible Society. The importance of the Bible cause and the vigor of the Christian people of Chicago alike appear in the long-time stalwart work of the Chicago Bible Society. The American Bible Society rejoices in the many years of collaboration of the two Societies, whose work, urgent as it has been in the past ten decades, was never seen to be more greatly needed. Upon the Bible Societies and all who can be rallied to their support rests the great responsibility of bringing to millions of hearts, to the life of the world itself, the one wholly adequate answer to their desperate need—the gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ in its printed form in the Holy Scriptures. The American Bible Society bids the Chicago Bible Society Godspeed in its second century.

The death on February 17, 1940, of Mr. L. J. Van Wijk, retired general secretary of the Netherlands Bible Society, was reported.

Copies of the Managers' Report on the One Hundred and Twenty-fourth Year of the Society in page form were distributed, and the Report was accepted and approved.

The resignation of Mr. Ellwood M. Rabenold was accepted.

The minutes of the various standing committees were presented and approved, and their recommendations adopted.

The meeting was adjourned.

Pass it on

If you have enjoyed reading this issue of the *Bible Society Record*, why not pass it on to your pastor or some interested friend. Every Bible lover should become acquainted with the *Record*.



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